

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated May 26, 2005. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 7-11 and 14-15 are under consideration in this application. Claims 1-6 and 12-13 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 7-8, 10-11, and 14-15 are being amended, as set forth above, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim Applicants' invention.

The claims are being amended to correct formal errors and/or to better disclose or describe the features of the present invention as claimed. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11 and 14-15 would be allowed if they are rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base and any intervening claims.

As claims 11 and 14-15 are being rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base and any intervening claims, they are in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1-6, 8, 10 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,237,087 to O'Conner (hereinafter "O'Conner"). Claims 7-9 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over 6,237,087.

As claims 1-6 and 12-13 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 7-10 are being amended to dependant from the allowed claim 11, the above rejection thus becomes moot.

Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



Stanley P. Fisher
Registration Number 24,344

Juan Carlos A. Marquez
Registration Number 34,072

REED SMITH LLP
3110 Fairview Park Drive, Suite 1400
Falls Church, Virginia 22042
(703) 641-4200

August 26, 2005

SPF/JCM/JT